

Experience has shown that the burden of meeting peace-keeping commitments has fallen on a small number of member states and has tended to go on and on. It becomes extremely difficult to terminate such commitments. Indeed, the price of peace keeping is small compared to the costs of war. I should have thought, therefore, that we would all be ready to pay our share of the cost. The risk of allowing existing operations to become ineffectual, or of failing to establish peace-keeping forces needed in the future, could well be very high. If this is acknowledged, it surely follows that support for, and contributions to, these operations should be more widespread, for the consequences of not supporting them might well turn out to impose heavier demands and graver dangers on the international community as a whole. In any event, I do not believe it is fair to expect that a minority of countries will continue indefinitely to bear the burden if the majority show little disposition to study the problems of peaceful settlement and to help share the costs of peace keeping.

Related to the subject of peace keeping is the question of the financial solvency of the United Nations. Canada welcomed the proposal of France at the last session that we investigate the financial and administrative practices of the organization. We were glad to participate in the ad hoc Committee of Experts appointed to make this investigation. We regard the report of the Committee of Experts as a document of the highest importance, and we shall press for the implementation of its recommendations, both by the United Nations itself, and by all the other members of the United Nations system. We hope, in particular, that the recommendations will lead us to focus our efforts on essentials by the rigorous application of priorities, and to adjust rates of growth of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies in accordance with the availability of resources, both human and financial.

In our concern with the problems of peace keeping, we must not fail to give attention also to the fundamental question of the peaceful settlement of disputes. It was unfortunate that, at a time when the Security Council had before it a long list of disputes, some dating back nearly 20 years, the General Assembly was at the last session unprepared to act on a proposal for a study of the procedures of peaceful settlement. Surely we have everything to gain and nothing to lose from a careful examination of past procedures and an impartial appraisal of future possibilities.

I listened yesterday with the greatest interest to the statement of Mr. Goldberg. At the last General Assembly, my Government took the position that in the General Assembly we could not avoid a discussion of the war in Vietnam, and I was heartened yesterday not only by what Mr. Goldberg himself had to say about Vietnam but by the initiative he took, in discussing this matter in this forum, in inviting our participation in that discussion and in urging all of us, as members of this organization, collectively and individually, to do what we could to try to bring an end to this conflict.

Our concern with peace keeping and peaceful settlement seems all the more justified against the background of the conflict in Vietnam. This is, in the judgement of my Government, by far the most dangerous issue now facing the world.